

¹¹My first find of *D. versicolore* was of two specimens hidden in the axils of burreed (probably *S. erectum*) in a field pond in N. Somerset in 1931, and two more in the same way a year later. Pondweed, the true foodplant, was doubtless present but the beetle was not to be seen on it. This seems to show that Donaciini may utilize other plants for shelter than those on which they feed, and serves to underline the point made by Mr. Parry that in unsuitable weather they may be discoverable only by very careful searching, if at all.

¹²This very handsome species (Fowler's *D. dentipes* F.) I regard as our most uncommon *Donacia* (leaving aside *obscura*), and *thalassina* the next. *D. aquatica*, like *obscura*, appears to be absent from Kent but several Sussex localities are on record. The foodplants in Britain are not well ascertained, but foreign authors mention *Ranunculus lingua* and that favourite *Donacia*-plant, *Sparganium*. When I took it, sparingly and very locally, in a ditch at Arundel in 1930 and 33, most if not all were on a floating 'grass' (possibly *Glyceria fluitans*). Further research seems indicated.

¹³I know of no recent Kent record, but the V.C.H. list gives Pegwell Bay and Deal. J. J. Walker used to take most of the British species in ditches behind the Deal sandhills, including the present one. Recorded foodplants are *Scirpus*, *Carex*, and *Typha*. I have only once met with *D. thalassina* — a few examples at the Wake Valley Pond in Epping Forest (1954), apparently from a *Carex* sp.

¹⁴*D. impressa* and *P. discolor* can occur in profusion (for the former cf. Allen, 1954, *Ent. mon. Mag.*, 90: 56).

¹⁵Besides those suggested here, I think that other contributory factors may be the persistence of residues from the widespread use of organochlorine pesticides in the '40s and '50s, and the continual seepage of nitrates into the water from inorganic fertilizers, leading to oxygen deficiency.

¹⁶For Donaciini in Sussex see Cribb, 1954, *Ent. mon. Mag.* 90: 80; Allen, *ibid.*: 144.

¹⁷As with *D. aquatica*, the foodplants of *P. discolor* in Britain appear uncertain, despite the comparative frequency of the species, but I think that almost certainly Mr. Parry's second suggestion is right. Sphagnum, besides being inherently unlikely as a foodplant in the group, is sometimes absent where the beetle occurs, nor is the situation always boggy. This was the case when I first found *discolor*, in a N. Somerset valley, very copiously on flowers of kingcup or marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*) in or near a shallow, more or less stony-bottomed stream. Continental authors associate it with unspecified sedges and also cotton-grass (*Eriophorum*), which are closely related.

¹⁸On 13.viii.70 my late friend G. Shephard and I each swept an example of this species off flowers of arrowhead which abounded in a pasture drainage-ditch on the marshes at Amberley, Sussex; we could not get near enough to search the leaves, but could see no beetles on them. This is the only time that I have fallen in with *D. dentata* — metaphorically, I hasten to add (though it was a near thing, with over-friendly and highly inquisitive cows persistently shoving and jostling us).

¹⁹This was fresh water, I understand — a circumstance very unusual for this normally brackish-water species. The other principal host-plant is *Ruppia*; *Zostera*, given by the older writers, seems questionable because of its marine habit. — A.A.A.]

EARLY DATE FOR THE DECEMBER MOTH: POECILOCAMPA POPULI (L.). — Amongst the 15 species of moths that appeared at my m.v. trap at Trosley Country Park, Kent, on 20th October was a fresh male of this species. This seems a very early date for this moth. — D. DEY, 9 Monmouth Close, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent, 24.x.79.

AN APOLOGY. — In my review of David Carter's *The Observer's Book of Caterpillars* (*Ent. Rec.*, 91: 176), I was in error in naming the larva figured as *Xylena exsoleta* as *X. vetusta*. — E. H. WILD.